

News From U.S. Senator

North Dakota

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DORGAN ASKS STATE DEPARTMENT TO INVESTIGATE CANADIAN LANDFILL

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) — U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND) asked Tuesday that the U.S. State Department join the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in investigating how North Dakota drinking water supplies might be affected by a proposed major new landfill in Canada which would be located just one mile away from the Souris River, a major source of drinking water for Minot and other nearby North Dakota communities.

The proposed landfill would be located near Estevan, Saskatchewan just 10 miles over the border in Canada. It will accept waste from a wide range of industries, including oil field wastes.

Dorgan said it is "not at all clear" that Canada will protect downstream watersheds from runoff or ground water contamination from the site. "A coordinated investigation, involving the EPA and the State Department is the only way to be certain we can avoid any potential hazards to the water supply in Minot and surrounding communities," Dorgan said. In a letter to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright released today, Dorgan specifically asked that the investigation make certain the proposed waste facility meets requirements of the Boundary Waters Treaty and all other environmental standards and agreements between the two countries.

North Dakota has worked hard to protect the environment and to prevent dumping of unwanted out-of-state wastes within its borders, Dorgan noted. "It would be unfortunate if regulations in Saskatchewan would allow large waste management companies to dump that same waste within watersheds which North Dakotans are attempting to protect," Dorgan wrote. "These questions need to be investigated prior to moving forward with this landfill project."

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